

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 DHA-02 /083 W

-----121142Z 022304 /11

P 121008Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5771

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY UTTM

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUWAITL

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY

USEC BRUSSELS PRIORITY

USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TUNIS 1054

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EEC, XF, TS

SUBJECT: SECOND SESSION OF EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE OPENS IN

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TUNIS FEBRUARY 10

REF: TUNIS 0898

1. EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE MEETING REOPENED IN TUNIS FEB. 10  
WITH FORMAL STATEMENTS IN GENERAL COMMITTEE BY LEADERS  
OF BOTH DELEGATIONS. ARAB POSITION, DELIVERED BY TUNISIAN

AMBASSADOR TO BRUSSELS, ISMAIL KHELIL, CONTAINED STRONG CONDEMNATION OF ISRAEL AND HARSH WORDS ABOUT RELATIONS OF EC AND INDIVIDUAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WITH ISRAELI GOVERNMENT. WARNING WAS VOICED THAT NO PROGRESS CAN BE MADE IN OTHER AREAS IF "POLITICAL SPIRIT" IS ABSENT FROM DIALOGUE. KHELIL CONTAINED THAT "UP TO NOW, NO PROGRESS HAD BEEN REALIZED ON THE POLITICAL LEVEL, A FACT WHICH CONSTITUTES A GRAVE NEGATIVE ASPECT IMPAIRING THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE DIALOGUE."

2. EUROPEAN STATEMENT DELIVERED BY DELEGATION LEADER RICHARD FABER UNDERLINED IMPORTANCE EC MEMBERS GIVE TO DIALOGUE. REGARDING ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE, FABER REITERATED COMMON EUROPEAN POSITION REACHED IN JANUARY 30 MEETING OF EC FOREIGN MINISTERS IN LONDON. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS HE DESCRIBED COMMUNITY'S POSITION AS FOLLOWS: (A) INADMISSIBILITY OF ACQUISITION OF TERRITORIES BY FORCE, (B) NECESSITY OF ISRAEL TO QUIT ARAB TERRITORIES OCCUPIED SINCE THE 1967 CONFLICT, (C) RESPECT FOR SOVEREIGNTY, TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE OF EACH COUNTRY IN THE REGION AND THE RIGHT TO LIVE WITHIN SECURE AND RECOGNIZED FRONTIERS AND (D) RECOGNITION THAT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JUST AND

HONORABLE PEACE IT IS NECESSARY TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, INCLUDING RIGHT OF EFFECTIVE EXPRESSION OF ITS NATIONAL IDENTITY WHICH COULD IMPLY A TERRITORIAL BASIS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT.  
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3. ADDING EXTEMPORANEOUSLY TO HIS PREPARED TEXT, FABER REPLIED TO KHELIL'S CRITICISM OF EUROPEAN RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL BY STATING THAT THE NINE THEMSELVES WOULD BE THE "SOLE JUDGES" OF THEIR RELATIONS WITH ISRAELI STATE AND THAT THIS WAS NOT A PROPER TOPIC FOR CONSIDERATION IN DIALOGUE.

4. EUROPEAN PARTICIPANTS IN GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING HAVE TOLD US THAT WHILE ARAB POSITION WAS HARSH, IT WAS NO MORE STRIDENT THAN HAD BEEN EXPECTED AND THAT "OBLIGATORY POSITION ONCE HAVING BEEN STATED," WORKING LEVEL CONTACTS ARE SURPRISINGLY FREE OF CONFLICT OR CONFRONTATION. EUROPEANS EXPECT WORKING COMMISSIONS AND SUBGROUPS TO ISSUE NON-TROUBLESOME STRAIGHTFORWARD STATEMENTS OF FUTURE OBJECTIVES AND PROGRESS TO DATE. REAL TEST, HOWEVER, WILL BE WRITING OF COMMUNIQUE BY GENERAL COMMITTEE'S DRAFTING COMMITTEE. SOME EUROPEAN PARTICIPANTS SPECULATE OUTCOME WILL BE SIMILAR TO PREVIOUS LUXEMBOURG COMMUNIQUE, IN WHICH NON-COMMITTAL NOTE IS TAKEN OF POSITIONS VOICED BY BOTH SIDES

ON MIDDLE EAST ISSUE. EUROPEANS HAVE RESISTED ARAB EFFORTS TO HAVE DRAFTING COMMITTEE CONSTITUTED IN FORM OF PERMANENT POLITICAL BODY. WE HAVE BEEN INFORMALLY ASSURED EUROPEAN DELEGATION WILL REMAIN FIRM ON THIS POINT NOTWITHSTANDING ARAB DELEGATION'S REPEATED VERBAL REFERENCE TO DRAFTING GROUP AS "POLITICAL COMMITTEE."

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TUNIS1054

5. COMMENT: IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT KHELIL'S  
OPENING ADDRESS WAS FAR LESS OPTIMISTIC THAN REMARKS

MADE BY TUNISIAN FOREIGN MINISTER CHATTY LAST WEEK  
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(TUNIS 0898). CONTRARY TO CHATTY'S ASSERTION THAT EUROPEANS HAD AGREED TO PUTTING POLITICAL ISSUES ON SAME "DISCUSSION TABLE," KHELIL STATED IN EFFECT THAT NO SUCH AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED. WE SUSPECT THAT THIS DIFFERENCE IN TONE AS WELL AS CONTENT IS RESULT OF INPUT OF OTHER ARAB PARTICIPANTS WHO HAMMERED OUT OPENING ADDRESS DURING THEIR FEBRUARY 7-9 PRE-CONFERENCE MEETING. AS EXPECTED MORE FORCEFUL VIEWS WON THE DAY AND WERE INCLUDED IN ARAB STATEMENT. ALSO AS EXPECTED MAIN FOCUS TO DATE HAS BEEN ON POLITICAL QUESTION AND STRUGGLE TO GET IT INTRODUCED FORMALLY INTO DIALOGUE. WHETHER IT WILL HAVE FRMAL STATUS OR NOT IS STILL POINT OF CONTENTION BUT WHATEVER ITS STATUS MAY BE POLITICAL ISSUE NOW SEEMS TO BE DE FACTO PART OF DIALOGUE.

6. FOR ADDRESSEES' INFORMATION EMBASSY IS NOT OBSERVING MEETING FIRST HAND (NO NON-PARTICIPANTS WERE INVITED) AND WE ARE GETTING MOST OF OUR INFORMATION EITHER FROM MEDIA OR PRIVATELY FROM MEMBERS EUROPEAN DELEGATION.  
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**Review Markings:**  
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